

SCRIPTURES FOR THE BLIND

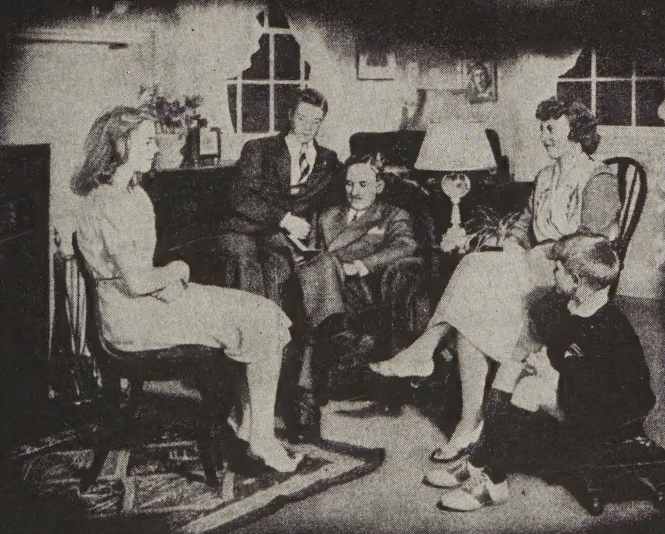
# BIBLE SOCIETY RECORD

DECEMBER 1942

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Watch  
Your  
Scripture  
Reading



UNIVERSAL BIBLE SUNDAY

December 1

(See page 1)

MISS BERTHA CHILDS  
LIBRARY-810 BROADWAY  
NASHVILLE TENNESSEE

TRANSLATION



# From Camp and Overseas

## **Best Thing**

**S**ECRETARY Mann received the following letter on October 9 from William F. Klein, secretary of the Board of National Missions of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., which tells its own story:

In your absence from the office, we telephoned requesting a few Bibles and Testaments for a young lieutenant who was leaving the same day on an armed merchant ship with a crew of eighteen. There is no chaplain on the boat, but this young lieutenant felt that there ought to be services. After conducting one service, the boys said, "This is the best thing that has happened on this boat. We wish we had Bibles."

I wish to thank you and your staff, who so graciously spoke to him over the telephone and volunteered to send down by taxi the Bibles and Testaments he needed for his crew. I am sure this generous contribution of yours will bear much fruit.

## **He Marveled**

**C**HAPLAIN Roy A. Carley of Camp Wheeler, Georgia, writes:

My spiritual life is enriched to see results of the gospel already in the camp. Much will be due to those who make possible these Testaments. One of my men accepted a Testament in the hospital, promising to read it. Later, when visiting him, I found him halfway through the second time—and this was his first time ever to read the New Testament. Next he read the entire Bible, and marveled at what he read. Countless numbers are for the first time in life reading God's Word.

## **Mother was Right**

**A** NAVY doctor writes just before going into battle somewhere in the Pacific:

The future is still uncertain, but we will have to trust for the best. One almost comes to think that our lives are planned ahead of time, and that we are permitted to see only one chapter at a time, and to do our best under the conditions which we find. Mother may have the right idea

after all. There are times when one needs someone to whom they can look for security. I read of one who fits the requirements. He stood beside the tomb of a friend one day, and said, "I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die!" This must seem strange coming from me. Well, I have been doing a bit of thinking and believing. I don't ask to come out without a scratch. All I want is to be given self-control and sound judgment to care for the men who may be in need of attention.

## **No longer Empty-handed**

**F**ROM "Somewhere in England" comes this glowing word from Chaplain Emanuel Carlsen, who is stationed at a hospital for American soldiers:

I have just received your shipment of three hundred New Testaments for free distribution to our personnel and patients. I cannot express my feelings as I unpacked the cartons. I have made my rounds to the wards with nothing in my hands. Now I have these fine Testaments, and everyone has a chance to read the Word of God.

It is when one is placed in circumstances such as we are here, that one appreciates the work of organizations like yours. We have no place to obtain supplies here, and we left the States so hurriedly, that we had no opportunity to obtain any there. My wife, who is keeping the "home fires burning" in every way, contacted you, and I deeply appreciate your splendid response. You can be assured

of a good use of the Testaments.

We have a thousand-bed general hospital here. These splendid young men come in to us in all sorts of conditions. My heart and mind are oftentimes sick. The thought of friends at home, interested and concerned and willing to help us, is a great source of inspiration.

I trust that you will have a continued incoming supply of funds, in order to keep up your valuable work. When I return, you can be certain that I will always speak well of the American Bible Society, even as I have done in the past.

(Continued on page 159)

## **A Prayer for Bible Distributors**

by H. C. TUCKER

**A**LMIGHTY God, we thank thee that thou hast caused thy Word to be written and translated into so many of the languages of men, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. We thank thee that Christ thy Son gave commandment and ordained means for the message of thy love, and his redeeming work to be made known to all men.

We thank thee for the untiring labors of all those engaged in the task of distributing the Holy Scriptures. We pray especially at this time for all Bible agents, colporteurs, missionaries, chaplains, and others who are placing in the hands of men everywhere the written message of thy redeeming love. Preserve them in health amid the dangers and hardships of travel, disease, and war; strengthen and encourage them in heart and mind, and bless their labors abundantly, through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.



# BIBLE SOCIETY RECORD

*A Journal Dedicated to the Wider Distribution of the Holy Scriptures*

Volume 87

December 1942

Number 10

## A Copy in Every Kit

by Rome A. Betts

THE greatest single task confronting the American Bible Society in the months immediately ahead is to continue the uninterrupted supply of Testaments and other Scriptures to the young men in our armed forces.

Nearly half of this third year's Emergency Fund of \$306,000 — or \$150,000 — has been designated for the purpose. This is a sum greater than all the Protestant churches of America contributed last year to the regular ongoing work of the Society.

Letters from Army and Navy chaplains continue to pour in, requesting additional supplies and expressing appreciation for quantities already received. The Society's new Army-Navy edition of the New Testament appears to be held in high regard by chaplain and sailor and soldier.

The presses are now turning out nearly 11,000 copies a day, and it will still be some time before orders are completely filled.

Funds for this most important service are still trailing far behind the Society's actual commitment. More than \$20,000 has been spent beyond receipts. This has been done, however, with the full faith that loyal friends will rally to this great opportunity. Here is the chance to place "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God," in the hands of those who will be the future leaders of our country.

Can anyone doubt its value or importance in the light of such statements:

Sometime ago you kindly sent me fifty Bibles for personal gifts to give to the men here in the camp as gifts from your Society. I have been having services for several weeks in the camp stockade, where the army prisoners are kept. The men greatly appreciate these Bibles, and are taking an increasing interest each week in the services.



*Soldiers at Prayer*

Yesterday morning, a new man was there whom we had not seen before. As soon as he saw the Bibles, he said, "How much do those Bibles cost?"—"Nothing," I replied. "The Bible Society gives them free of charge."—"Could I help in that work?" he asked.—"Certainly, if you wish to," I replied. So he gave me a dollar bill, and I am herewith sending the dollar on to you.

I thought this story coming out of the camp prison might be interesting to you as you see the effect of your Bible distribution."—*From a chaplain at Camp Blanding, Florida.*

I received my wages today. I'm sending five dollars for the Emergency Fund. I wish everyone would realize what God's Word can do for us, if only we, each one of us, would use it. Read it daily if possible. I've been reading mine at night—in the barracks. Several of my barrack mates have become interested. I've given out about three or four New Testaments, getting them at the chapels and giving them to the boys who are interested. All seem to respect the Bible,—no one scoffs at those who use it, and occasionally someone will mention the Bible in very respectful tones.

The Bible meant ever so much to me at home. Here it means even more, if possible. I remember the Society in prayer, and like to keep track of what it is doing through the BIBLE SOCIETY RECORD.—*From a soldier at Fort Knox, Kentucky.*

These are days of heavy taxes, to be sure, but they are also days of sacrificial giving. Many of the Society's friends have already contributed to this project. Let it be hoped that many more will respond in the light of what has been said here.

Some may wish to avail themselves of one of the forms of annual membership in the Society, and designate their membership gift to this purpose.

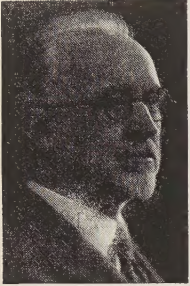
The kinds of membership are listed on the back cover. Mail in the coupon with your check or money order.



# The Echoing Bible

*A personal testimony requested by the Editors from the author of the  
Syndicated Ellis Sunday-school Lesson*

by William T. Ellis



William T. Ellis

**O**F the famous echoes that a traveler hears around the globe, I have been most impressed by two—that in the Taj Mahal, Agra, India, and “Dionysius’ Ear,” in Syracuse, Italy.

But I know a more remarkable echo than any of the earth’s phenomena—the far-spreading and resounding messages that originate in the Bible and spread far and long.

In volume and power and penetrativeness this voice exceeds any other social force ever known to man. The influence of the Scriptures, as quoted, interpreted, and applied, is simply incomprehensible.

We do well to let our imaginations play upon the subject of the number of sermons that have been preached in Christendom’s nineteen centuries of life; the number of talks in homes and Sunday schools and religious gatherings; the number of books and articles and poems that have been written—all based upon the Bible,—all echoing its teachings. The figures that even an ordinary mind may try to conceive reach astronomical proportions. These secondary echoes of Holy Writ are really beyond the comprehension of mortals.

Once we start thinking upon this line, we confront the consequences that have followed this diffusion of Scripture’s teaching: the minds that have been awakened to original thinking by these words (for there is no other thought starter like a passage of Scripture); the life decisions that have been determined; the social movements that have been started; the lives that have been redeemed from sin to sainthood; the world-wide church that has been created.

Tempted to enlarge upon this theme, I heed the Editor’s intent in asking me to write, by relating my own personal experience with the life-giving book. That I have been for more than forty years the most widely circulated commentator upon the Bible astonishes me, and even shames me; for a better man should have done the work more skillfully. I have no academic equipment for the task that is mine. I went to work in the mills before I had reached my teens, and at fifteen was “printer’s devil”

in a Philadelphia newspaper office. From that job I worked up to reporting when I was seventeen; and my life since has been spent in writing for newspapers. The worst of my assignments was that of society editor (to this day I never read a society page). My most interesting job was that of foreign correspondent, which carried me thrice around the globe, and perhaps ten times to Europe and the Near East—the lands of the Bible.

Early fired by the Bible with ambition,—“Being ambitious to preach the gospel where Christ was not already named”; “If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God”; and “I can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth me,”—I specialized in religion in the daily press. About forty-five years ago I began to syndicate comments upon the Christian Endeavor topics and upon the International Sunday School Lesson. It was not easy. I had to persuade editors to print my articles, making trips when possible, but all the while carrying on my regular newspaper work of reporting, writing editorials, a “say-what-you-please” column, and special articles. As I look back, I wonder how a frail body ever carried such a load.

In time, I had more than a hundred clients, newspapers big and little, which regularly carried my weekly column. Some of my original papers are still with me. Recently I made some simple calculations, based on circulation and years, and was astounded to learn that more than three and a half billion copies of the Ellis Lesson have been published.

I suppose that is a world record. And it all came about, with no thought of large-scale production, simply by doing each week’s Lesson in time for the printer: I have never missed a deadline. I bear testimony, in passing, that there is no great issue of life that I have not been able to meet squarely on the basis of interpretation of the International Uniform Sunday School Lesson. The constant recognition of contemporaneous life, the up-to-dateness of the lesson, has caused it to be quoted every week in tens of thousands of Bible Classes; and to be prized—far beyond its deserts—by individual readers who want the light of eternal truth upon their present-day living. Whatever merits this lesson may possess, are accounted for by its loyalty to the Scripture’s clear teachings; by my journalistic contacts with



many-sided life; and by my frequent trips to all Bible lands. (So far as I can learn, Mrs. Ellis and I are the only persons who have covered the entire far-flung area of the geographical background of Scripture. We have been in every place mentioned in the Bible.)

Now I am coming to the point of this little article. Three syndicate writers—Frederick J. Hasking, Dorothy Dix, and myself—share the honor of being the veterans of the syndicate field. Why have I survived the years, a commonplace layman with no special talents, when brilliant journalists by the score have risen, shone, and faded?

Here is my confession: I have plagiarized the Bible! I call my Lesson "The life of today in the light of the Bible; the Bible in the light of the life of today." I have tried to make my writing sane and readable, and free from unreality, fanaticism or sectarianism, by adhering to the clear teachings of the Book. Catholics as well as Protestants read it, as my "fan mail" attests. The learned and the great and men of affairs have followed it (one President of the United States told me that I had "brought him

up"!); humble and unlettered folk have fed upon it. This imperfect echo of the Word has had an unprecedented hearing because it has been an echo.

Always I have in mind the fact that the newspaper penetrates where no clergyman or religious publication may go. It is read in the palaces of the rich and in the humble homes of the poor. It goes into prisons, brothels, gambling dens, as well as into the habitations of average persons. Via the modern press is one way to "go ye into all the world." And the response to a sincere presentation of divine truth is beyond measure.

Now, in the world's greatest emergency, I am engrossed in portraying the essential relation of the Bible's teachings to present conditions. For the old Scriptures are more up to date as a guide through this jungle we call the world, than any document produced by statesmen or scholars. If we are to be found on God's side, where alone victory resides, we must go thither by the paths clearly marked out in the Book of Books. And our peace program and postwar program must echo God's own teachings, if this war is not to have been in vain.

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## The Solomon Islands

*From another angle*

by W. H. Rainey

*Commonwealth Secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society in Australia*

THE Solomons, with an area of 17,000 square miles and a population of 200,000, consist of a chain of islands just east of New Guinea. Most of them are mountainous and densely wooded. They are separated one from another by deep, still waterways, which present to the traveler a picture of enchanting beauty. The inhabitants, before they knew Christ, were treacherous and fierce head-hunters, as explorers, teachers, and missionaries found to their cost.

Situated slightly to the east of the southernmost island, San Christoval by name, lies Rennel. The Bible Society, working together with the South Sea Evangelical Mission, has just published the Gospel of St. Mark into the language spoken by the inhabitants of this small and little known island, who, strangely enough, are not Melanesians, but Polynesians. Missionaries first visited Rennel in 1909, and found the people to be friendly, intelligent, and supposedly ready to receive teachers.

On August 14, 1910, following the usual method of procedure, three native teachers named Thomas

Sandwich, Tommy Makira, and Andrew Kanirara, converts from other islands, were landed. The missionaries sailed away with their cheerful "good-byes" ringing in their ears. It was near the end of the year when their schooner returned. They expected a joyful reception, and were eagerly looking forward to earnest accounts of spiritual triumph. Instead there was a silent shore, a ruined house, and three

**TWENTY-FOUR** of the languages spoken on the Solomon Islands have some part of the Bible published in them. In each case the language had first to be reduced to writing. The six languages having the whole New Testament are Bugotu, spoken on Ysabel Island; the Florida Island language; Lau, Malu, and Saa, all spoken on Malaita Island; and Ulawa, spoken on the island bearing that name. Of the languages spoken on Guadalcanal Island, the Gospels and Acts have been published in Vaturanga, and selections in Logu.



heaps of human bones. It transpired that, the second day after the missionaries' departure, the teachers were massacred, robbery being the motive. With reverent hands the missionaries gathered together the mortal remains of God's ambassadors, and buried them on the beach. And so the curtain dropped on the first attempt to evangelize Rennel.

Owing to government restrictions, twenty-four years passed before any further attempt was made to reopen this field. In 1934 permission was given to again visit the island, and later twelve young men were taken away for a year's training at the mission at Onepusu, Malaita.

In 1936 the island was again closed. For two years there were no visits, but the Rennelese converts were witnessing for God. In 1938 the missionaries returned. Let one of them, Mr. Waite, picture the scene for us:

We climbed the cliffs and reached the top, pausing for prayer and guidance. Then we approached the clearing where the village is situated. Suddenly there came into view a well-built church, standing on the site of the chief's old tabu house where for years the people worshipped their gods. The congregation was streaming out from morning worship, and we had a great welcome. The chief, Taubongi, led in cheers of greeting. The missionary looked into his face, and saw a marked change. The people were happy, their faces radiant, their bodies clean. Then we said to the chief, "Taubongi, you love the Lord Jesus now?" He smiled, and said, "Yes, this time I love Jesus."—"But what about your 'atuas' (gods)?"—"They are finished with. Now we have Jesus only."

Meanwhile Miss C. Waterston, now sixty-seven years of age, who had already distinguished herself in the Pacific linguistic field, felt the call to translate the Scriptures into Rennelese. With this end in

view, she studied Maori, Samoan, and Tongan, copying out St. Mark's Gospel in the three kindred languages, putting them side by side, verse for verse. On December 18, 1940, she arrived at Onepusu to learn Rennelese. Unfortunately, she fell sick on arrival, and as she herself said, "Only a strong sense of having been sent by God kept me steady. By his grace I was soon better, and have never been ill again."

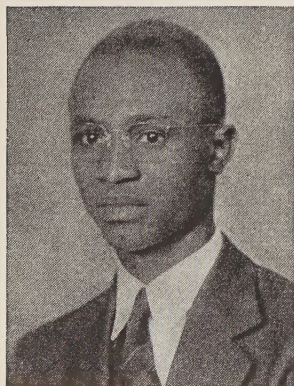
Four of the evangelists proved valuable helpers, and soon the undaunted lady was speaking yet another language. Soon a Rennelese hymn book was in the press, and a catechism, produced by Miss Deck, who was the first to reduce Rennelese to writing, in process of revision. Then, the approaches cleared away at last, the translation of St. Mark was begun. The four boys were helpful, and the Maori version was always on hand for consultation. Finally, the great task was finished, and a "Te Deum" of gratitude ascended to God.

The work of production is now over. Teacher, translator, and printer have done their part. Now one thousand copies of the Gospel of St. Mark in Rennelese lie in the office of the Commonwealth Secretary in Sydney. Five of them have special inscriptions—one is dedicated to Miss Waterston, the translator, and four to her devoted helpers, Teikagei, Tegea, Luke Teketa, and Pugeva.

The next step—the final one—is to get the books to Rennel, where the Christian community is eagerly awaiting them. Can this be done? The way seems definitely closed; yet we cannot help feeling that the splendid faith of Miss Waterston and her colleagues in undertaking such a work at such a time will be rewarded with success.

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## Lincoln County Gets Its Bibles



Rev. W. O. Lendsey

"EVERY home in Lincoln County (Arkansas) was visited. . . . We are pleased to report that every Bibleless home has been supplied with the Scriptures. We are happy to know that the Dallas Division has one county where the Scriptures may be found in every Negro home."

So writes Secretary Sheppard in reporting

on the special project which his Division of the Haven Agency for Colored People carried through this summer between June 1 and September 1. The special worker was Rev. William O. Lendsey, of Little Rock, Arkansas. He and Dr. Sheppard visited 2,077 homes, of which they found 444, or twenty-one percent, without Bibles. Altogether they distributed 208 Bibles, 212 New Testaments, and 4,100 Gospel portions.

Mr. Lendsey preached in many of the 55 Negro churches, spent 60 hours teaching the Bible to children, and, in doing all this work, drove 4,000 and walked 700 miles.

We wish that space permitted the reproduction of all seventeen of the pictures which Mr. Lendsey took.



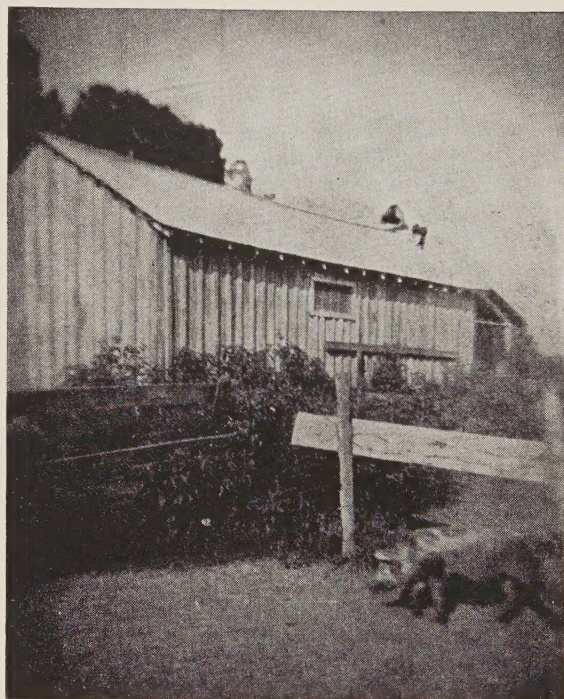
Little do most of our readers know of such primitive conditions. One is of a windowless shack in which nine persons live—a mother and eight children, mostly below working age. Mr. Lendsey says of the mother, "I have never been more impressed with a person who believes in God as this lady does. She can not read nor write, but she has outstanding judgments about common things. Her home had been burned, and therefore she was without a Bible. One, of course, was given. The older children can read."

Lincoln County is one of 75 counties in the state of Arkansas, one of 575 counties in the Dallas Division of the Haven Agency, which comprises Arkansas, Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, and Kansas; one of the 2,952 counties in all the states of the Union. There could be nothing more salutary done for our country than to have every home in every county of the country visited as were the Negro homes of Lincoln County, Arkansas, and a volume of the Scripture supplied either by sale or gift to every home found without one. Four times between 1829 and 1892 the American Bible Society did undertake to furnish a Bible to every American home without one. Today the task would attain such proportions, that it could be done in only one way: the same way that all deeds of kindness and good will are done; the same way that prevents the poor from starving, and the sick from dying of their ailments—only one way, and that is for the people of each county to take upon themselves the responsibility of seeing that it was done. Lincoln County is probably below the average. If the average were twice as high, say ten percent, it would mean that Bibles would have to be supplied to ten percent of the estimated 35,000,000 homes in the country, or 3,500,000 Bibles. Even if this were done over a period of five years, it would mean that the American Bible Society would have to produce as many additional Bibles in each of the five years as the total it has produced in the last two years.

This is not idle thinking. This is terribly important thinking at the moment. One of the ever-present dangers in the life of a democracy in days of war is that the people shall lose their freedom in the very fight to preserve it; for military necessity nationally tends toward Fascism. We must win the war; but we must not lose our liberties. One way to preserve them is to keep the nation close to the Bible. Calvin Coolidge once said, "The foundations of our government rest so much on the teachings of the Bible, that it would be difficult to support them, if faith in these teachings should cease to be practically universal in our country." With a tenth of our homes not even possessing a Bible, there is little hope that such a faith shall be preserved.

There are hundreds of counties in our land that

could organize and finance such a project as was carried out among the colored people of Lincoln County, Arkansas. Possibly, some reader of these paragraphs will lead the way in his county. To the limit of its resources the American Bible Society offers its cooperation and assistance.



This picture gives the back view of a small farm store in Lincoln County located about seven miles from any town. The store carries the most common type of groceries, such as salt meat, cheap grades of flour, meal, sugar, tobacco, etc. The bell shown on the front of the building is used to announce the time to start work in the morning, time to stop for noon hour, and time to stop work in the evening. The people usually labor from sunrise until sundown. This system, known as the rising-bell system, is used on most of the large farms in this county.

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## Madagascar

ABOUT Christmas time, 1941, the British and Foreign Bible Society cabled to the Bible House in New York: "Madagascar without Scriptures—can you help?" Immediate steps were taken to bring assistance to the Christian community in this one of the most promising mission fields in all the world. After long negotiations amid the vagaries of a global war, on September 8 came the following cablegram from Missionary James Conolly in Tananarive, Madagascar:

Received with grateful thanks \$2,937.50, 127,612.65 French francs; work well advanced.



# The Franklins Return from Thailand

**I**N an earlier issue we promised to give a report on the safe arrival of Rev. R. O. Franklin and his wife, who, we had heard, were being repatriated from Thailand. They were among those who reached New York on August 25 aboard the S.S. Gripsholm.

Mr. Franklin states that, on December 8,—which was December 7 on this side of the date line,—he and Mrs. Franklin were notified by the Embassy to report there with hand baggage within half an hour. There were other missionaries in the Bible House at the time, and when the group left in cars for the Embassy, a Japanese armored truck turned into the Bible House driveway. This dramatic appearance, however, proved to have no effect; for the truck promptly backed out, and followed the party until they reached the Embassy.

Due to the presence of the Thailand pastor, Rev. Boon Mark Gittisan, who has been trained by Mr. Franklin for local responsibilities, the Thailand government did not seal the entire building, but only the apartments of the foreign staff, which were later searched. After some time at the Embassy, Mr. Franklin and his wife were transferred to an internment camp, where conditions were not excessively unpleasant, except for the proximity of anti-aircraft locations, which were occasionally bombed by the British. During his stay in the internment camp, Mr. Franklin had two or three interviews with Mr. Gittisan. Fortunately, Mr. Franklin had cashed his own last salary check; but approximately \$3,500 of the Society's funds were frozen in Bangkok banks. Mr. Franklin feels that the Thai people are counting upon the United States and Great Britain—the United States especially—for securing their freedom from the Japanese. The situation in which the Thai people were placed was such that it was impossible for them to resist successfully the Japanese. They have no desire to live under Japanese domination.

While Mr. Franklin was in an internment camp, Pastor Gittisan succeeded in renting the apartment in the Bible House to a German engineer, who pays 120 ticals a month. This, together with a small amount (180 ticals) which Mr. Franklin was able to put into the hands of Mr. Gittisan, will compensate him for his work to the extent of twenty ticals a month, and will help him maintain and protect the property. No publication and no distribution can be carried on, although two colporteurs are still working quietly with the stock they have on hand.

Concerning the status of the Society's work in Thailand during 1940-41, Mr. Franklin reports that the rise of antiforeign sentiment and of Buddhist

hostility to the work of Christian missions led to attacks upon our colportage staff. The first colporteurs to be imprisoned were in East Thailand. These had gone to a new town in the morning and had rented a room, as they expected to remain for several days, working the town. At night they sat talking till rather late. They did discuss war conditions some, but did not utter one word or even hint against the government. They were all alone, but evidently some police had been listening on the outside; so toward morning their place was raided, and they were arrested on the charge of plotting till a late hour against the government. They were held in prison, and were not allowed to send any word to their families or the missionaries. In about a week the very best colporteur in all Thailand, Nai Chalome, was sent to visit the three men and see what could be done for them. He was allowed to see them, and while he was in the cell, they opened the Bible and read a few verses from the Acts and prayed together. In Nai Chalome's prayer he thanked God that they could suffer persecution and stand true to Christ, even as did the early Christians. He was arrested as soon as he left the prison, and all of them were given a two years' sentence. But since it was the first time any of them had been in court, and upon the promise of good behavior, the time was reduced to one year.

Meanwhile, in southern Thailand, Charles Hoch made the remark, "If the government continues to raise taxes, we will soon all be poor." A policeman heard the remark, and arrested him. He was charged with talking against the government, and so received a two years' sentence. Tan Yo Lom was a preacher and colporteur living a short distance from Bangkok. He had a sick baby in the house on a night that had been designated as a "blackout" night. During the time of the blackout, he flashed a flashlight on the sick child when they were giving it medicine. The police saw it, accused him of giving signals with the flashlight, and he was given fifteen years. Rev. Sook Pongsanoi and his wife were both imprisoned for a short time—he is a half-time colporteur. Because of the bitter persecution, most of the colporteurs asked permission to leave the work for the present. All were given a three months' retiring allowance.

These conditions, of course, caused the practical cessation of the Society's active work in Thailand, not only through the colporteurs, but also through the missionaries and voluntary workers. The colportage training school held in cooperation with the Christian and Missionary Alliance in East Thailand went forward, however, encouragingly.



# Translating the Living Word into the Heathen Kilega Tongue

by Rev. Ellen I. Burk

**I**N 1922 five missionaries went out from the Evangelization Society of the Pittsburgh Bible Institute to establish mission stations in a huge region in the dense forests between Lakes Kivu and Tanganyika in Belgian Congo. After crossing jungles, mountain ranges, and desert valleys inhabited by lions, leopards, and other fierce creatures, we settled down among four large cannibalistic tribes, beginning intensive missionary work among the 500,000 Waregas in the Kivu District, with Shabunda as headquarters.



*Miss Burk and "Blind Dolly who was a great help in testing words used in the Kilega Acts"*

Among these Warega natives we tabernacled, living in tents and leaf huts until our abode houses could be built; getting acquainted with the natives, their customs and language; seeing almost no other white faces besides our own party. We cried unto the Lord to help us "think black," in order to understand these brown-skinned cannibals, who peered at us from behind trees, or peeped through the small hole of a window or the cracks in our huts to see what kind of people had arrived.

What strange people they seemed to us; for they pointed with their noses instead of their hands; they pulled out their eyelashes instead of their eyebrows; they cut their tribal story in patterns upon their skins; and they filed all but their molar teeth to sharp points, the better to eat the human flesh. They wore scanty bark or grass loin cloths; and their oily bodies were decorated with witch doctors' fetishes to protect them against the wiles of the white man and the evil spirits.

But our God had made no mistake in sending us among them: for his divine love in our hearts took away all fear, causing us to see the embryo of his love springing up within their hearts, and drawing them to their Maker as the living Word was given forth. In many miraculous ways the Lord drew these cannibals out of the dense jungles of darkness, superstition, and witchcraft, bringing them into the glorious light of the Good News.

As the Waregas knew only their mother tongue, I was assigned to intensive work on the language, particularly on the translation of the New Testament from the original Greek. In giving forth the Word, my vocabulary increased, and by 1932 a primer and 114 hymns and songs were printed.

To accelerate the work of translation, I had trained a native teacher, Kangamina Francais, to typewrite. For three years we worked strenuously; formulating the alphabet, compiling the dictionary and grammar in Kilega, Kingwana (the intertribal trade language), and French. We recorded over 1,000 native proverbs, and over one hundred pages of folklore. Besides the Kilega primer and the hymnal, we translated other schoolbooks, the catechism, Old Testament stories, and the Gospel of St. Mark and other Scripture portions.

When Kangamina became exhausted and desired a year's rest, I trained another teacher to typewrite, Alberti Kikuni, who worked well for over four years. We completed the translation of the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, testing out words with the help of other teachers and Blind Dolly, who, at the age of three, we had found in a frightful condition, more dead than alive, one stormy night under an old tree, but who, with love and care, had become a lovable and most helpful companion. More work was done upon the dictionary and grammar. Eight



or more of the advanced teachers at Shabunda and Kama proofread all the Kilega translations; while entire Bible Classes consulted with me concerning the meaning of the difficult words.

How did we get this strange heathen tongue, you inquire? It was through hard work saturated with prayer. The words representing things perceived with our senses were not difficult; but to get the conception of abstract general terms was a problem. Such words as *joy, peace, grace, truth, and desire* were found, but what was the word for *divine love*? One day I asked Chief Muligi's son these questions: "Do you like your wife? Does she like you?" How I rejoiced to find the word for *love* as he answered, "Nyafikili, namutunda mukikulu namutunda mukikulu wane, tondo enelama inne," which means "Mother Thinker (my name), I like my wife; but she loves me." *Tunda* is the root for the verb *like*, while *elama* is the root for *love*. I knew that *lama* meant *live*; the prefix *e* made this verb reflexive; so that the subject of this verb performs the act upon itself. Therefore *elama* means "she loves" or "she herself lives." Yes, loving is real living. Sometimes we can even learn from the heathen.

Since the Warega tribe had no written language, I have written it phonetically as I heard it. Some consonants can not be pronounced by the Waregas, as they have filed teeth. Instead of *j* they say *y*; *l* or *d* for *r*; *k, s* or *ch* for *c*; and *kw* for *q*. The vowels have either a raised or a lowered tone. When the raised tone falls upon the final vowel, nearness or immediate past time is indicated. This is clearly demonstrated in the secret code of the Waregas' talking drum, which they taught me. Kilega is a beautiful language, often it sounds like music to the ears, and some of their laws and customs are even sung at court.

In 1934 the British and Foreign Bible Society published the Gospel of St. Mark. When this first printed volume of the Scriptures reached the hands of the Shabunda teachers, several fell to the ground in astonishment, marveling that their mother tongue was a real language into which the Word of God could be printed. As the Scripture was read to a workman, in amazement he shouted, "The Kingwana has only reached my head; but now these Kilega words of God go from my head down deeply into my heart, and they are sweet!"

During my present furlough a revision of St. Mark and translations of St. Matthew and St. Luke were printed on a small press at the Pittsburgh Bible Institute, as well as a songbook and a dictionary and grammar in Kilega, Kingwana, and English. The British and Foreign Bible Society had promised to publish St. John for us; but because of the war this was done for them in New York by the American Bible Society. The translation of the Acts, also ready for printing, after examination by Dr. Boyd, has now been published by the American Bible Society. There will be great rejoicing among the Waregas when these precious volumes arrive in the Congo, and many souls will be brought into the Light through the sacrifice of those in the homeland who gave unsparingly of their time and means to send the printed Word to those in darkness.

It is a marvelous language for the heathen to possess. In our pioneer days it sounded like the chattering of the monkeys in the nearby jungles. Surely, the Lord has a place of service for these Waregas in the kingdom of God; for theirs is a wonderful language in which the Holy Bible can be translated. What a wonderful book which can be translated into all languages, through which the Living Word can be given forth to all mankind!

• • •

## A Victory Book for the Blind

by S. Ruth Barrett

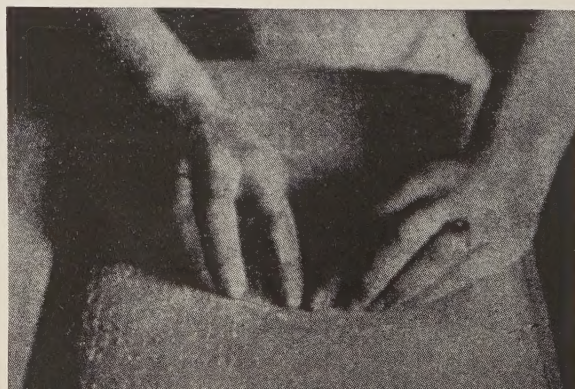
"I CALL it my 'victory book,'" said a blind visitor at the Bible House, when inquiring about a copy of the Society's Small Volume of Scripture Passages. "I've used my copy so much,—it is worn out,—and I would like a fresh one. This little volume has meant more to me than I can say."

A blind Sunday-school teacher calls it her "treasure book." She carries it with her to church every Sunday, and uses it constantly in teaching her sighted class of boys and girls.

A grandmother, who says she lives in a suitcase,

having to travel about considerably, spending a few weeks with one relative and a few weeks with an-

Reading fingers







*John 3: 16 in Braille*

other, calls it her closest companion. "I take it with me wherever I go. It would be hard to be without it."

"One of my most helpful aids in preparing my sermons," states a blind minister dearly loved by his congregation.

This little book, being 6¾ inches by 11 inches in size, is, by comparison, so much smaller than the regular bulky embossed books of the Bible for the blind, that many refer to it as their "pocket Bible." (A Braille Bible is in twenty large volumes, 11 by 11 inches each, and costs \$47.) Our readers will be interested in the contents of this volume, which follow:

Where verses are not specified, the whole chapter is given.

Genesis 1: 1-5, 26-27, 2: 7 "In the beginning God"  
 John 1: 1-5 "In the beginning was the Word"  
 Exodus 20: 1-7 The Ten Commandments  
 Matthew 22: 36-40 Christ's summary of the law  
 Psalm 1 "Blessed is the man"  
 Psalm 23 "The Lord is my shepherd"  
 Psalm 51 "Have mercy upon me"  
 Psalm 91 "He that dwelleth"  
 Psalm 119: 97-104 "O how love I thy law!"  
 Psalm 121 "I will lift up mine eyes"  
 Isaiah 40: 1-8, 28-31 "Comfort ye, my people"  
 Isaiah 53 "Who hath believed our report?"  
 Isaiah 55 "Ho, everyone that thirsteth"  
 Matthew 1: 18-21 The Birth of Christ  
 Luke 2: 1-20 The Birth of Christ, (*continued*)  
 Matthew 5: 1-12 The Beatitudes  
 Matthew 6: 9-15 The Lord's Prayer  
 Matthew 11: 28-30 "Come unto me"  
 Luke 11: 9, 10 "I say unto you, Ask"  
 Luke 15 Lost sheep, coin, and prodigal son  
 John 3: 1-17 Christ's talk with Nicodemus  
 John 14 "Let not your heart be troubled"  
 John 17 Christ's prayer  
 Mark 15 The crucifixion  
 Mark 16: 1-15, 19, 20 Christ's ascension  
 Acts 2: 1-4 Coming of the Holy Spirit  
 Romans 12 "I beseech you"  
 1 Corinthians 13 "Though I speak with the tongues"  
 Hebrews 10 Sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice  
 Hebrews 12: 1-13 "Wherefore seeing, we also"  
 1 John 3 "Behold, what manner of love"  
 Revelation 21: 1-11, 22-27 "I saw a new heaven"

Probably, more copies have been printed of this prized Volume of Scripture Passages than of any other book for the blind. It is available in the New York Point, Braille, and Moon systems, and also on

two talking-book records. It is supplied to the sightless at the special price of 25 cents a copy, and the records are also offered at 25 cents each.

Hundreds of copies will go to pupils in the state schools for the blind as Christmas gifts this year—a service made possible through contributions from friends of the blind to the Society's Blind Fund.

A blind war veteran writes: "It is the most precious and valuable gift I ever received, and it will afford me many happy and contented hours."

I wonder how many working fingers, troubled fingers, fingers crippled with arthritis, have gathered strength and courage as they pressed the raised dots on the pages of this little book, and whose proud possessors have won the victory of peace which only the reading of God's Word can give.

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*(Continued from inside front cover)*

### **Big Order**

**I**N May the "boys of the department 436" of the Studebaker Corporation in Chicago sent the Society six dollars for forty Testaments to be sent "to General MacArthur's Airmen in Australia." When the Testaments were shipped, Secretary North explained to the senior chaplain with the American forces in Australia that the Society would be glad to provide additional Testaments; that it was the Society's intention that no service man who seriously desires a New Testament should be denied one. In September came a reply from Chaplain J. E. Kinney, Chief Chaplain at the Headquarters of the United States Army Services of Supply, Southwest Pacific Area, which read as follows:

Your offer to send us an additional number of New Testaments is very acceptable at this time. We can adequately use 25,000 copies.

They are being shipped in lots of 5,000 every two weeks.





# Editorial Comment



## BIBLE SOCIETY RECORD

*A Journal Dedicated to the Wider Distribution of the Holy Scriptures*

Editors: THE SECRETARIES

Address correspondence to Francis Carr Stifler, Editorial Secretary, Bible House, Park Avenue and 57th Street, New York

Vol. 87 DECEMBER 1942 No. 10

TO EDITORS: *The Bible Society Record* invites reprinting of its articles in whole or in part. Its contents are not copyrighted.

THE accompanying picture is of the Wayside Fellowship Trailer, supported each summer by the Episcopal and Presbyterian U. S. A. churches. This past summer the



trailer brought the gospel message to scores of communities in southern Ohio and Kentucky where there are no privileges of worship or Bible study. The American Bible Society makes an annual grant of Scriptures for distribution by the Wayside Fellowship.

• •

FROM the *Rust Craft Rustler* we learn that Mrs. Karl Weigand, of 422 W. Girard Avenue, Philadelphia, is building much good will; for she has made it a practice for some time to give to every soldier and sailor who enters her store one of the Society's New Testaments. We congratulate

Mrs. Weigand on this splendid service, and recommend it to others.

• •

"WITH the Bible in Latin America" is the title of a fifty-six page booklet which the Society has prepared, especially for use in mission study classes during 1942 and 1943. It can be secured at ten cents a copy, and is replete with current information bearing upon the amazing growth of interest on the part of the people in our neighbor nations to the south.

• •

A FRIEND in Portland, Oregon, writes us ten days after the death of her husband:

I am happy to be able to send you a check for \$3.50 for your noble work. Use it wherever it is most needed.

There is a little story behind this gift. My dear husband passed away on August 17 after a minor operation. A dear friend, who seldom sends flowers, sent me a check for \$2.50 to use wherever I chose. I thought what might be the best,—keep it for myself or contribute it to some good cause.

Then the thought came to me during the night,—why not send it to the Bible House where it might do more good than somewhere else? I prayed over it and received the conviction to do that very thing. My husband was a preacher in the German Methodist Church for almost fifty-nine years, starting to exhort when only twenty-one years old in Germany. He preached in this country for over fifty-three years. This gift will continue the work he loved so much.

I told the nurse here in the home about my decision. She was inspired by your good results in the Bible distribution, and said to me, "I earned a dollar for a little extra work, and feel as you do. It is sacred money. I will give you my dollar to send along with yours." So here is \$3.50 of consecrated money. I was so glad to give her the last issue of the RECORD, and she was surprised at the scope of your work. I told her that she probably also would have the RECORD sent to her. We are both in the Baptist Old People's Home, she as nurse and I as an inmate.

• •

FROM the state prison at Raiford, Florida, come the following two discerning letters in response to the Society's grant of Bibles to the men in

the prison hospital. One is from the chief medical officer, who writes to Secretary North:

Mere words can not express my deep appreciation for the wonderful Bibles you have given the state prison hospital.

I am sure the men who will read them will never forget the generosity of this Society which has gone out of its way to show men that others still have a feeling of good will toward their fellowmen.

In a similar vein the superintendent writes:

Our chaplain, the Rev. L. A. Shepard, has just shown me the Bibles which you so generously and loyally contributed for the use of the prisoners in the hospital. It was a wonderful thing, Dr. North, and I believe you would be surprised to know how deeply the prisoners appreciate your gift.

For myself, I join Chaplain Shepard in sincere thanks. Both of us are firm in the belief that no social problem ever is settled permanently until it is settled on the basis of religion. You have helped us here in carrying on that effort.

## Universal Bible Sunday

THE cover of this issue carries a reproduction of the beautiful six color poster that will be displayed in tens of thousands of churches during this month. Universal Bible Sunday falls this year on December 13, some churches observing it a week earlier.

On the air, Universal Bible Sunday will be observed by special broadcasts on all four of the major networks, the Columbia, the Mutual, the Red and the Blue. The nationally famous Negro program "Wings over Jordan" will also be dedicated to the observance of that day. Hundreds of local radio stations will carry appropriate messages and announcements.

The President of the United States and the governors of many of the states have issued official endorsements which will be widely quoted in the newspapers. Readers of the Bible Society Record can do much by directing the attention of their friends to these notices and broadcasts, and so help to call our nation's attention to the need for wider and more devoted study of God's Word.



## October Meeting of the Board

THE sixth stated meeting of the Board of Managers of the American Bible Society in its one hundred and twenty-seventh year was held at the Bible House, Park Avenue and 57th Street, New York City, on Thursday, October 1, 1942, at 3:30 p.m., Vice President William Jay Schieffelin in the chair.

Devotional exercises were conducted

by Mr. Ray Clarke Tillinghast.

The minutes of the fifth stated meeting of the year were presented and approved.

The minutes of the various standing committees were presented and approved, and their recommendations adopted.

Dr. Ralph Mortensen was elected Secretary for the China Agency to take effect on January 1, 1943.

Copies of the new editions of the

Papiamento Gospel of St. John, the Book of Job in Turkish, and the Malinké New Testament were presented.

The new Bible Sunday poster was presented.

The Board approved of inviting the official representatives of forty-six denominations to attend the annual meeting of the Advisory Council on Wednesday, December 2, 1942.

The meeting was adjourned.



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